NEWS RELEASE
From Mayor Dean DePiero

PARMA CANCELS 4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS

(PARMA) – In a continuing effort to cut spending, the City of Parma has cancelled its annual July 4th fireworks display at the western campus of Cuyahoga Community College.

"None of these money-related decisions are easy, but this one was the toughest yet," said Parma Mayor Dean DePiero. "When it's all said and done, to spend thousands of dollars on fireworks and overtime when we are furloughing employees doesn't make a whole lot of sense."

The City of Parma recently announced an income tax revenue shortfall of approximately $2.4 million. Non-union city employees are taking a total of 16 unpaid furlough days from now until the end of the year. The mayor is negotiating with nine city unions, asking its membership for the same concessions. The mayor and members of his administration are among those included in the furlough plan.

"Donations normally cover the cost of the fireworks – about $25,000," said Mayor DePiero. "So far, we collected only $16,000. The real issue is the additional cost of overtime holiday pay for police, fire and other city employees to ensure the safety of an event that draws several thousand people from northeast Ohio. That pushes our total cost anywhere from between $40,000 to $50,000. We simply cannot afford it, and we would never invite a large crowd into our community if there was any question of adequate safety."

The less costly Parma July 4th Parade *will* go on as scheduled. Mayor DePiero says the parade incurs far less overtime and city expense than the workforce needed for safety and crowd control at the fireworks display.

"I know canceling the fireworks this year is disappointing to our residents," said Mayor DePiero. "And I'm disappointed, too. This was a tough call that I had to make in order to try and stabilize our city budget. The bottom line is we can't spend money we don't have."

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